

In the Claims:

Please cancel Claims 2, 16 without prejudice.

Please replace claims 1, 3, 10-13 and 15 with the following:

Claim 1

Sub 1  
C3

1. (Thrice Amended) A bearing pad assembly comprising:  
a first housing having an exterior surface and defining a bore extending at least part-way through said first housing;  
a first load bearing member coupled to said first housing, and defining an outwardly facing first abutment surface;  
a second housing defining a bore of a shape similar to said exterior surface of said first housing and adapted to slideably receive said first housing therein;  
a second load bearing member coupled to said second housing and defining an outwardly facing second abutment surface opposite to said first abutment surface;  
at least one slip lining positioned between said first housing exterior surface and a bore wall defining said second housing bore; and  
at least one compression spring positioned within said first housing bore, wherein said compression spring comprises a solid resilient material having a toroidal shape for urging said first and second load bearing members away from one another in response to a load being imposed upon at least one of said first and second abutment surfaces.

Claim 3

C4

3. (Amended) The assembly of claim 1 wherein the compression spring deforms non-linearly in response to said load imposed on at least one of the first and second abutment surfaces.

Claim 10

10. (Thrice Amended) The assembly of claim 1 wherein the slip lining has a coefficient of static friction less than that of the first housing.

Claim 11

11. (Thrice Amended) The assembly of claim 1 wherein the slip lining is attached to the first housing exterior surface.

Claim 12

12. (Thrice Amended) The assembly of claim 1 wherein a second slip lining is attached to the second housing bore wall.

Claim 13

13. (Thrice Amended) The assembly of claim 1 wherein the slip lining is made substantially of an organic polymer.

Claim 15

15. (Thrice Amended) A bearing pad assembly comprising:  
a first housing having a bore extending through said first housing;  
a first load bearing member coupled to said first housing and defining an abutment surface opposite to said first housing;  
a second housing having a bore extending through said second housing, adapted to telescopically receive said first housing;  
a second load bearing member coupled to said second housing and defining an abutment surface opposite to said second housing; and  
at least one compression spring in the shape of a special toroidal shape ring positioned within said first housing bore, for urging said first and second abutment surfaces away from each other in response to a load imposed on at least one of said abutment surfaces.

Please add the following New Claims 17 through 22:

Claim 17

17. (New) The assembly of claim 1 wherein the compression spring has a largest diameter slightly smaller than that of the first housing bore.

Claim 18

18. (New) The assembly of claim 1 wherein an inner most point of a cross section of the toroidal shape of said compression spring is on a line drawn perpendicular to an axis of rotation of the spring through the geometric center of the cross section.

Claim 19

19. (New) The assembly of claim 15 further comprising two compression springs positioned within said first housing bore.

Claim 20

20. (New) The assembly of claim 19 further comprising a plate positioned between the springs, separating the springs from one another.

Claim 21

21. (New) The assembly of claim 15 further comprising a first slip lining attached to said first housing exterior surface.

Claim 22

22. (New) The assembly of claim 21 further comprising a second slip lining attached to the second housing bore wall.